

MEMORANDUM

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

DECLASSIFIED  
 Authority E.O. 12958  
 By SP NARA Date 8-16-02  
 5643

SECRET (XGDS)

October 9, 1973

MEMORANDUM FOR: SECRETARY KISSINGER

FROM: WILLIAM B. QUANER *WR2*

SUBJECT: Talking Points for Meeting with Bipartisan  
 Leadership of Congress

The main thrust of your remarks to the Congressional leadership should be to dispel some of the concerns that they have expressed about our policy in the current crisis. In particular, our low-key public posture should be explained as part of our diplomatic effort to enlist Soviet cooperation to avoid a confrontation. You will also want to make it clear that we did not prevent Israel from any action she was contemplating on October 6, as some have suggested. Finally, you will want to describe our planning efforts to insure that an oil shortage will be dealt with as effectively as possible and to protect American citizens in Arab countries.

Talking Points

--I want to make clear that neither we nor the Israelis expected this war. We had noted the Arab buildup and had queried the Israelis about it, but they told us they thought it was defensive in nature. Two hours before the war started, Prime Minister Meir sent us a message saying she thought hostilities were imminent. She volunteered that Israel would not attack first and we conveyed this message to the Arabs and Soviets. We did not stop Israel from acting.

--Let me give you a brief rundown on our very intensive diplomatic efforts. Once fighting broke out, our first priority was to keep the Soviets from becoming militarily involved in the conflict. Thus far the Soviets have made it clear they do not want a confrontation.

--We would hope to come out of this crisis with a ceasefire in which both sides are back in the positions they started from. This is the most defensible position, we feel, since it would avoid rewarding the Arabs for breaking the ceasefire, while also avoiding new complications

XGDS - 3

DECLAS - Date Impossible to Determine.

BYAUTH - Dr. Henry A. Kissinger

SECRET (XGDS)

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DECLASSIFIED  
Authority E.O. 12958  
By SP NARA Date 8-16-02

SECRET (XGDS)

- 2 -

by having Israel occupy more Arab territory. The problem has been that no one else is anxious to support this position, but as developments on the ground begin to favor the Israelis, we may find more support.

--We are aware that the longer the fighting goes on, the greater the danger it will spread. We have advised the Jordanians to stay out and they appear willing to do so, despite considerable pressures from other Arabs.

--The other dangers to our interests involve oil and threats to US citizens in Arab countries. There have been no signs of problems for Americans yet, but we have alerted all of our posts in the Arab countries to be ready to evacuate if necessary. In addition, if an Arab oil boycott is declared, we will not be directly affected right away, unless the European countries prohibit the export of refined products. If they do that because of shortages, then we may have to institute a rationing and mandatory allocation system. This is being studied very carefully.

--We hope that the fighting will end in the next day or so, without our relations with the Arabs, Soviets or Israelis being badly damaged. If this occurs, then we may be in a reasonably good position to move ahead with efforts to bring about a negotiated settlement of the overall conflict, which remains our long-term objective.

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SUGGESTED TALKING POINTS FOR BRIEFING LEADERSHIP

I. General Observation

- Israelis have suffered significant military and psychological setback regardless of probability they will fight back to ceasefire lines.
- Longer war goes on, more pressure on our friends Hussein and Faisal to become involved.
- Disproves Israeli view that 1967 ceasefire lines are secure and that all options except negotiations were closed to Sadat.
- Hope that from ashes of present conflagration some fresh new move for peace will evolve.
- Your intensive diplomatic efforts at Waldorf.
- Unsolicited Israeli assurance no preemptive attack contemplated.

II. Resort to Security Council when our efforts failed to prevent outbreak.

- Elements of position in Scali speech: end fighting, restore conditions conducive to settlement, and get a negotiation started.
- Felt with war going on, place to go was Security Council.

DECLASSIFIED  
Authority E.O. 12958  
By WOP NARA Date 8-16-02

-2-

-- No consensus present there; people waiting to see how situation on ground develops. We proceeding deliberately.

-- Ceasefire resolution or ceasefire plus return to 1967 lines.

### III. Military Situation

-- We had reports of Syrian and Egyptian military activity for a couple of weeks which we checked with Israeli intelligence who said these were defensive moves.

-- Eban on Thursday expressed no concern.

-- None of the Arab diplomats gave any indications; on the contrary, their focus was to get U.S. involved in a diplomatic initiative.

-- On Friday night, October 5, Israeli reports became less sanguine but still no attack expected.

-- At 6:00 AM, Saturday morning, you were notified by Israelis that action imminent.

-- First and second days, Egyptians and Syrians on the offensive, dealt with largely by air and small ground forces in place. Third day, Israelis completed mobilization and have contained Arab forces with some progress in pushing Syrians back.

DECLASSIFIED  
Authority E.O. 12958  
By WOP NARA Date 8-16-02

-3-

- Difficulties being encountered on Golan Heights:  
SAM-6's; large Syrian armored forces.
- Inability deal quick knock-out on Golan Heights has  
permitted Egyptians to strengthen salients on Suez  
Canal front.
- Situation today (attached SITREP).